UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE
National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration
NATIONAL ENVIRONMENTAL SATELLITE, DATA
AND INFORMATION SERVICE
Suitland, Maryland 20746-4304

Before The
FEDERAL COMMUNICATIONS COMMISSION
Washington, D. C. 20554

In the Matter of	)	
	)	
Extend Interference Protection for the	)	MB Docket No. 03–50; FCC 03–37
Marine and Aeronautical Distress and	)	
Safety Frequency at 406.025 MHz	)	
	)	
Notice of Proposed Rulemaking	)	
	)	

COMMENTS OF THE SEARCH AND RESCUE SATELLITE AIDED TRACKING PROGRAM STEERING GROUP

The National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration Search and Rescue Satellite Aided Tracking Program (SARSAT) respectfully submits these Comments in response to the Notice of Proposed Rulemaking published in the Federal Register on March 31, 2003 (68 FR 15419). These Comments are submitted on behalf of the SARSAT Program Steering Group, comprised of representatives of the USAF Rescue Coordination Center, USCG Office of Search and Rescue, NASA Search and Rescue Mission Office, and NOAA SARSAT Program Office.

The Commission is invited to note the COSPAS-SARSAT 406 MHz frequency management plan now includes frequencies ranging from 406.025 MHz to 406.076 MHz. In addition to 406.025 MHz, 406.028 MHz is already in use, and 406.037 MHz will soon be available. **Thus, the SARSAT Program Steering Group suggests that § 76.616 be revised to extend protection to 100 kHz below 406.025 MHz and 100 kHz above 406.076 MHz.** The Commission has already taken note of the COSPAS-SARSAT frequency management plan in its revision of 47 CFR 80.1061 in its Report and Order released April 9, 2002, WT Docket no. 00-48.

In addition the Commission is invited to note the international Cospas-Sarsat Program decision, taken at the 25th Council Session, October 2000, to terminate satellite processing of distress signals from 121.5/243 MHz emergency beacons on Feb. 1, 2009. The implication of this Cospas-Sarsat decision is that users of beacons that send distress alerts on 121.5 /243 MHz should begin using beacons operating on 406 MHz if the alerts are to be detected and relayed via satellites. Meanwhile, anyone planning to buy a new distress beacon may wish to take the Cospas-Sarsat decision into account.

For the Search and Rescue Satellite Aided Tracking System Program Steering Group,

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